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of Engineers®
Sacramento District

The Prospector

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**Sacramento
moves to reduce
flood risk**

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On the cover:

Flood risk
reduction has
often been the
topic of the
day lately in
Sacramento.
The Corps and
city officials look to clear up
the picture with projects at
Folsom Dam and in Natomas.



Photo by Tyler Stalker

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Flood-reduction efforts are heavily on the minds of
Sacramento residents and politicians

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The Way Ahead

With Col. Thomas C. Chapman



In this issue you will read about the results of our analysis of the Natomas basin levees. You may be familiar with this topic as there have been recent articles in the newspaper and even short segments on local TV news. This has been a very challenging issue, and our Flood Risk Management Program Team has done a super job putting the results of our analysis together and communicating those results up and down our chain within the Corps, and with our local, state, and federal partners. Through this entire process we, the Corps, have kept our message consistent and clear. Public safety is of paramount importance, and we will transparently communicate any known levee deficiencies so that all who live or work behind those levees understand their risk.

Throughout this process we have worked very closely with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. We will continue to work closely with FEMA as they update their Flood Insurance Rate Maps for other areas in the central valley. We have heard many times that the risk of flooding in California's central valley is greater than it was in New Orleans before Hurricane Katrina. It is good that we have so much national and state attention on the central valley right now. We will have busy times ahead as we are asked to certify other levee systems, but this is all good, because it is all in the interest of public safety.

In addition to this important flood risk management work, now is also the most critical time of the year for finalizing our project execution schedules for this Fiscal Year. I think you have heard me say before that project execution, or delivery, is the most important thing we do. As a project-funded organization, if we didn't have projects we wouldn't have money and we wouldn't have a workforce. In Sacramento, we have more than enough projects. Hiring the quality people we need to complete our projects is our biggest challenge. Therefore, figuring out how to get all our scheduled work done is a Huge challenge. It takes very detailed planning and coordination to figure out exactly when and how we will execute the different requirements on each of our hundreds of projects. That planning and coordination is going on now, and it is absolutely critical that it is done very, very well.

As always I would like to call your attention to our deployed teammates in Afghanistan and Iraq. Support to the Global War on Terror remains the Corps' number one priority, so we continue to encourage those who would like to deploy. Our District is a leader in the Corps for these deployments, so if you're considering deploying but have some questions, we definitely have the expertise here to answer them.

Finally, in these challenging, busy times, I want to stress safety above all else. All of our work is very important, but its accomplishment will never outweigh the value of any one person. Please think about your own safety and that of your teammates before starting any task. Please join me in welcoming Mr. Charles "Chas" Colbert, coming to us from the Kansas City District, who has graciously agreed to serve a detail in our District as our Safety Chief. Chas has volunteered for a huge job, as you know, and I really want to thank him for taking it on. He has unhesitatingly jumped right in with the spirit we have here in SPK.

Essayons!
COL Tom Chapman

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Jason Redeen wins Hardhat of the Year

By David Killam

Congratulations go out to Jason Redeen, who was announced as the winner of both the South Pacific Division and Corps Headquarters Hardhat of the Year Award for 2006.

"I am surprised and grateful to receive this award," said Redeen. "I was just doing my job and I am glad that my efforts were recognized."

Redeen, the son of retired and well-loved district employee Randy Redeen, has been with the Sacramento District for 10 years, starting out as a summer hire before being hired in the Soils Design Section. He got his Civil Engineering degree from Sacramento State University in December of 2001. He started his assignment as a project engineer at Hill Air Force Base in

"Don't be afraid to try new things, you might even surprise yourself with what you can accomplish"

- Jason Redeen
2006 Hardhat of the Year

Engineer. This past year Redeen earned his license as a Registered Professional Engineer in the state of Utah. He has been married for two-and-a-half years. His wife Rachel is a CPA and works for PriceWaterhouseCoopers as an auditor.

Utah shortly after graduation. Redeen has had the opportunity to bounce around working in Soil Design, American River Project Office, Project Management and the Utah Resident Office. He is currently ending a term serving as the acting Resident Engineer during the temporary absence of the current Resident



Photo from HQ/USACE
Jason Redeen, temporarily of the Utah Resident Office, receives the Hardhat of the Year award from Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp, chief of engineers, during a ceremony in August 2007.

Redeen would love to stay on at Hill Air Force Base in military construction once his temporary term is up.

"One of the best things I ever did was to volunteer for the Utah assignment, as I found something that I love to do," he said.

Redeen was presented the Hardhat Award in August 2007. He attributes the selection to many of the employees that he has worked with during his time with the Corps.

"I would like to thank everyone who had a positive impact on my career, including the people in Geotechnical Branch and everyone I've worked with in Construction, especially the people at the Utah Resident Office. Without the support of the URO I would not have received the award," Redeen said.

What's Redeen's advice to help new employees get ahead at the Sacramento District?

"Ask a lot of questions," Redeen said. "Don't be afraid to try new things. You might even surprise yourself with what you can accomplish."

Redeen hasn't surprised anyone with his ability to produce for the Sacramento District and we're glad to have him as part of our team.

Eglington Preserve In-lieu Fee Mitigation Program to restore 145 acres of riparian habitat in Nevada

By Steve Roberts, St. George Regulatory Field Office

The Saint George Regulatory Field Office recently coordinated a unique interagency collaboration in Las Vegas, Nevada, forming the Eglington Preserve In-lieu Fee mitigation program. As a result, approximately 145 acres of riparian aquatic resources in the Upper Las Vegas Wash, a tributary to Lake Mead, will be restored, enhanced and preserved within five years through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 permitting program and the Bureau of Land Management's Las Vegas Field Office.

"Perhaps the biggest challenge that we face in issuing 404 permits inside the Vegas Valley is a lack of mitigation options which are a result of a lack of private land, a lack of water resources and the recent unprecedented development," Project Manager Steve Roberts said. "The Eglington Preserve presented both a rare and unique 'win-win' opportunity for the BLM, The Nature Conservancy, USACE and, most importantly, the aquatic environment."

Within one short year of project conception, both agencies and TNC worked together to develop and approve the final mitigation plan.

In crafting this unique plan, Lisa Clay of the Sacramento District Office of Counsel proved pivotal in developing a framework that involved a Memorandum Of Agreement between USACE and TNC to accept funds from Corps 404 permittees, and a separate MOA between BLM and TNC to allow BLM to accept restoration efforts that otherwise would not be performed as a "gift" from TNC.

"This never would have reached fruition without Lisa's support and the 'can-do' attitude of everyone involved throughout the collaborative planning process," BLM's Gayle Marrs-Smith said.

Mauricia Baca, Southern Nevada Project for TNC states, "In addition to containing unique paleontological and biological resources, the



Photo from Steve Roberts
Mauricia Baca of The Nature Conservancy, Gayle Marrs-Smith of the Bureau of Land Management and Steve Roberts of the St. George Regulatory Field Office work closely on the project.

Eglington is special because of its urban setting in North Las Vegas. This plan provides for a unique natural setting for the surrounding communities of Las Vegas and North Las Vegas. Additionally, Eglington provides a wonderful opportunity to educate the community on the importance of the protection and preservation of desert washes."

"Unfortunately for our 404 applicants, the Eglington is rapidly approaching 50 percent of the 2.6 million dollar project budget and will be fully funded in 2008 - once again leaving 404 applicants such as developers and municipal planners shy of feasible mitigation options. Fortunately, we are hard at work with BLM, TNC, and other area stakeholders to develop new opportunities for aquatic restoration efforts in the Lake Mead watershed," Roberts said. "The regulated public has expressed tremendous support for the Eglington and like efforts, and having such worthwhile mitigation plans as feasible options available for our applicants certainly makes life easier for everyone involved with the permitting process."

Virtual team tackles tough site

By Patricia Graesser, Chief
Seattle District Public Affairs

A virtual team including members from the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Corps of Engineers' Sacramento, Albuquerque, Seattle, Kansas City and Omaha Districts, is working to clean up groundwater below a former California creosote plant.

From 1942 to 1990, McCormick & Baxter Creosoting Company treated utility poles and railroad ties with creosote, pentachlorophenol (PCP), and compounds of arsenic, chromium and copper. Now the McCormick and Baxter Superfund site occupies approximately 32 acres in a predominantly industrial area near the Port of Stockton, Calif.

In mid-1992, the EPA began an investigation into the nature and the extent of groundwater contamination at the site.

It was determined that groundwater beneath the site is contaminated with wood preservative chemicals, and groundwater contaminant plumes emanate from the site and migrate past the site property line. However, no drinking water supplies are currently threatened by site-related contamination.

"Creosote is very difficult to get out of the ground, and it will leach contaminants for decades," said Omaha District's Michael Bailey. "Fortunately they are not very mobile — they don't move far from the source."

"No one is at risk right now," said technical manager Kathryn Carpenter, Seattle District. "Nobody is drinking the water and there are no plans to use it as a source of drinking water."

Albuquerque District has been the Corps' project manager and Seattle District has been technical lead for the groundwater unit of the cleanup since the 1990s. The Corps is continuing to investigate cleanup alternatives for the EPA,



File Photo
Emile Pitre, Seattle District, James Stellmach, Sacramento District, Bruce Van Etten, Sacramento District and Glen Terui, Seattle District, collect samples from one of the 110 test wells at the McCormick & Baxter Superfund site.

and the plan is to select a final cleanup remedy some time after 2010.

The project goal is to remove NAPL - Non-Aqueous Phase Liquid (a liquid that is denser than water and does not dissolve or mix easily in water) - to the extent practicable to reduce the continuing source of groundwater contamination or to contain NAPL sources that cannot be removed.

To better develop the range of alternatives and to better understand the situation, the team is investigating two things: where and how fast the groundwater is migrating; and the rate at which the contaminants degrade and under what conditions.

"How long will the NAPL source last before it's gone? If it degrades faster than it is moving" there is less concern, Carpenter said. "If not, then we look at the most cost-effective way to address it."

The team is conducting on-site and laboratory biological studies to determine at what rate the naphthalene degrades in anaerobic conditions and what factors might influence that rate. Omaha District is leading this phase of the project, using a Kansas City District contract.

"We have a bunch of circumstantial evidence that indicates the chemicals are breaking down, and we suspect biological processes," said Bailey

Natural attenuation has been evaluated for other types of contaminants such as Trichloroethylene-TCE, but for things like naphthalene in the type of conditions at McCormick & Baxter, there isn't much research out there, said Bailey.

The contractor will analyze groundwater and soil samples in a lab over time. Because components like naphthalene break down very slowly, it may take months to see if the contaminants are being broken down in a biological process. If the team does show that the process is occurring, then they can look at ways they might encourage the biological activity.

At the project site, the team has more than 110 test wells in place now and is testing twice a year to look at groundwater direction and at an extensive list of chemicals of concern, natural attenuation parameters and geochemical conditions. Seattle District's Joe Marsh has been field lead for the water sampling effort since 1999, when he was initially coordinating annual testing of 20 wells.

Now the scope of the testing has grown significantly, with Corps of Engineers staff sampling 60 wells twice a year. The location is, of course, a Superfund site, but even Marsh who has worked on many says this site is the worst because of the dust, sometimes high temperatures and consistent "mothball" smell that the naphthalene produces.

However, the team has chosen to continue to do the work with Corps employees. "It is unusual to do the work in-house," said Marsh, but the EPA had used a contractor in the past and is more satisfied with the way the Corps conducts the sampling.

The Seattle and Sacramento District team can test about a half dozen wells a day. They test the water as it is withdrawn for temperature and some chemical properties. Then the sample bottles are put onto ice in a cooler until each day's set of samples is shipped via Federal Express to four waiting labs across the country.

"In April we shipped 8,000 pounds of samples, and we had to fill over 1,200 bottles with water samples so we had to order more than 80 cases of bottles and keep a room full of empty coolers

and two deep freezers full of ice," said Marsh. They will return in October for more sampling.

"We're in the investigation phase," he said "Results have been fairly consistent though. We can map the plume — where it's going and in what concentration."

The project is so complex with so much data that the team is looking to use the Equis data management software to manage the data and allow them to view it in three dimensions and many other ways.

"This has been an opportunity to work on a complex and challenging problem," said Carpenter. "The nature of the contaminants — recalcitrant chemicals — and in a tough site makes it interesting."

The technical team is made up of experts across the country including project manager Marie Lacey and peer reviewer John Wilson at EPA, Corps project manager Monique Ostermann, Albuquerque District; Chuck Coyle, Carol Dona and Michael Bailey, Omaha District; Kathryn Carpenter, Mick Easterly, Jefferey Powers, Joe Marsh, John Wakeman, Tim Grube at Seattle District. In addition, expert contractors and Professor Mark Widdowson at Virginia Tech are all working with the government to find a solution at the McCormick & Baxter site.

"If it wasn't for the initiative of the team members and their willingness to run with what they're doing, this wouldn't be such an easy project to manage virtually," said Osterman.

"This process illustrates how the resources the Corps has nationwide can be brought to bear on a complicated project," said Michael Bailey.

With such a wide ranging virtual team, they meet via phone every other week to track tasks and check in. There are also monthly calls with the EPA to ensure all the involved parties are kept fully informed.

"Marie [Lacey] works directly with the technical teams. She's great in supporting Seattle's use of new technology," said Osterman.

"It is a great team of sharp people who like what they do working on interesting science. I get to work with the very best experts," said Carpenter. "We've made progress, investigated options and are working to really understand the situation."

Sacramento District reports Natomas levee analysis findings to city, media members

By David Killam

It's never good to be the bearer of bad news. But when public safety is at stake, there simply is no choice – the information has to come out.

Engineers at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District made a finding that will indirectly have a profound impact, at least temporarily, on future development in the Natomas area of Sacramento.

The City of Sacramento asked the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to designate the Natomas area, north of Sacramento, as being in a special flood zone that would result in lower home insurance rates and would not stipulate significant building restrictions. In order to award this special flood zone, FEMA regulations required the City to have the Natomas levees certified by a Federal flood-control agency, which in this case was the Army Corps of Engineers.

The District's findings were that risk associated with levee performance in Natomas during a three percent flood event possible in

any given year was unacceptable for public safety.

"We did not do a complete analysis of the entire 34-square mile area of Natomas," Roger Henderson, senior engineer with the district. "We felt that it was critical for the city to receive the information in a timely manner. If we had done a total analysis, it would have taken much longer to complete the study. We had a wealth of knowledge and experience in two western reaches of Natomas. We knew that there had been serious underseepage problems in these areas. And Corps policy requires us to certify an entire flood defense system. If any area fails the analysis, the entire flood defense system is non-certifiable."

Not surprisingly, the areas analyzed failed in two important areas. First, some portions of the levees were too low and could be susceptible to over-topping during flood events. And secondly, other areas had a history of significant underseepage during flood events.

The District's position was supported by external peer review. The following engineering consultants provided the confirmation: West Consultants, Shannon and Wilson, California State Urban Levee Investigation Board and GEI.

The District then had to inform the public about the analysis results. It was not a step that was taken lightly. Corps leadership was aware that the non-certifiable status of the Natomas levees was very bad news for the City of Sacramento and its residents: without certification of the Natomas levees, FEMA regulations would require the agency to place Natomas in a flood zone category that called for severe restrictions to building activities. The practical result would be that all development activity would stop. Nevertheless, Corps leadership felt that the information was critical for the 70,000 people who live in Natomas.

"The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a responsibility to rigorously evaluate public safety risks and inform communities so citizens can take action to reduce flood risk and protect

life and property," said Col. Tom Chapman, Sacramento District Engineer "We are constantly looking for ways to reduce the risk."

After several weeks of planning and meetings, the District team decided on a two-prong approach to public notification: the District would select a day for media notification, once the external peer reviews of the District's analysis were completed. That day turned out to be January 15. There would be a briefing for print journalists in the morning, followed by interview with the broadcast media at a park on the levee.

The briefing for print journalists was held at District headquarters at J Street. Representing the Corps were: Col. Chapman, Kevin Knuute, John Hess, John Nowell, Roger Henderson, Torrie McAllister and Dave Killam. Also on hand from FEMA were: Frank Mansell, Kathy Schaefer and Cynthia McKenzie. Reporters present were: Samantha Young from Associated Press, Matt Weiser from the Sacramento Bee, Tamara Keith from National Public Radio and Celia Lamb from the Sacramento Business Journal.

Photo by Tyler Stalker
Col. Thomas Chapman talks to the media during a press event with the Federal Emergency Management Agency about the recently completed levee analysis conducted by the Corps on the levees in Natomas.



During each media event, Col. Chapman began with opening remarks, explaining the District's position and giving a brief history to events in Natomas. Roger Henderson followed up with a discussion of the technical aspects of levee conditions and inspection methodologies.

The same team of Corps/FEMA representatives (less Kevin Knuute) was present at Shore Bird Park in Natomas for a briefing to the broadcast media. Numerous media outlets including: KOVR, KXTV, KXTL, KUVS and others were present for the District Engineer's and Roger Henderson's presentation, which were followed by questions and answers.

"It was a very successful event," said Torrie McAllister, Strategic Public Affairs Specialist from the Corps' South Pacific Division. "We needed to get the information out and I think the public response shows that we presented our case effectively."

And so what's next? The Corps will continue to work with its partners, the City of Sacramento, Sacramento County and the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency to continue the vital work of flood control.

For more information about Natomas, you can go to CorpsNatomasInfo.com.



Photo by Tyler Stalker

Kathy Schaefer of the Federal Emergency Management Agency discusses the implications of placing Natomas under a flood zone category that would require new construction to build at elevated levels as a result of the levees not meeting the standards of a three percent flood event.

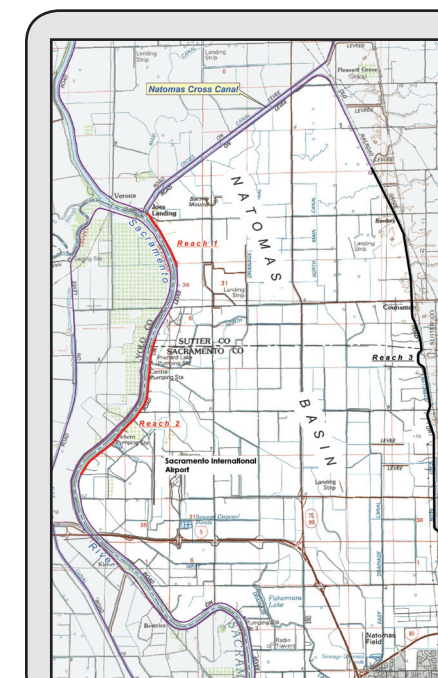


Photo by Michael Nevins
Map shows the two reaches (red lines) that the Corps of Engineers found to be in danger should a three percent flood event hit Sacramento. It also shows a stretch of levee (black line) that would require more data to determine its susceptibility. Overall, if even one point in the levee system is deficient, then the entire system has to be de-certified.

The Corps of Engineers' findings were supported by multiple engineering consultants, including: West Consultants, Shannon and Wilson, California State Urban Levee Investigation Board and GEI.

Corps, project partners break ground on Joint Federal Project



Photos by Michael Nevins
Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger talks during the Joint Federal Project groundbreaking ceremony.

Col. Thomas Chapman and Mike Finnegan of the Bureau of Reclamation prepare to detonate fireworks to officially kick off construction of the Joint Federal Project at Folsom Dam.



By Jennifer Mijares

A ceremonial blast of bangs, pyrotechnic streams of light and smoke in the sky marked the official groundbreaking for the Folsom Dam spillway.

US Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District Commander Colonel Tom Chapman and Acting Regional Director for the Mid Pacific Region, Bureau of Reclamation Mike Finnegan co-hosted the Joint Federal Project groundbreaking ceremony January 11, 2008 at Folsom Dam. They were joined by California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne, Congressman John Doolittle, Congressman Dan Lungren, Congresswoman Doris Matsui, California State Senators Darrell Steinberg and Dave Cox, Sacramento Mayor Heather Fargo, and South Pacific Division Commander Brigadier General John McMahon.

The groundbreaking marks the start of construction for a historic partnership and project between the Corps and Reclamation that will not only meet the flood damage reduction and dam safety objectives of both agencies, but will do so at a substantial cost and schedule

2015, six years earlier than originally expected. "Not only are we able to complete this project

faster, at a reduced cost, but we are able to reduce the community's risk of flooding that much faster," added McMahon.

When completed, the project will consist of an auxiliary spillway that will include

a 1,100-foot-long approach channel; a concrete control structure, including six submerged gates; a 3,000-foot-long spillway chute; and a stilling basin that will act as an energy dissipater. Excavation for the project is underway and construction of the spillway will begin in fall 2010.

"This project has become a model for two federal agencies working together"

- Brig. Gen. John McMahon
Commander,
South Pacific Division

savings. "This project has set a new precedence and has become a model for two federal agencies working together," said Brigadier General McMahon. Working together, along with the Central Valley Flood Protection Board and Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency, the project is now scheduled to be completed in

Project Facts

The Joint Federal Project will:

- Excavate 3.5 million cubic yards of fill
- Place 350,000 cubic yards of concrete
- Incorporate 26 million pounds of steel
- Safely pass 312,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) of flow from the auxiliary spillway, combined with 550,000 cfs from the main dam outlets, for a peak discharge of 862,000 cfs from the Folsom facility.

Schedule

(subject to availability of funding)

US Bureau of Reclamation Phase I Excavation
Winter 2008 - Fall 2008

USBR Phase II Excavation
Fall 2008 - Spring 2010

Auxiliary Spillway Construction
Fall 2010 - Winter 2015

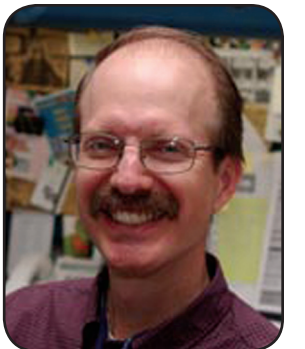


National Council honors team featuring Corps' West Coast engineers

By Patricia Graesser, Chief
Seattle District Public Affairs

Brad Call, engineering division, and Sherri Moore, Seattle District, were recently recognized as members of the Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council team of the year.

The team is a state-led, multi-agency sampling, characterization and monitoring team, which provides tools, information and training to state regulators across the United States.



The Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council consists of 49 states, the District of Columbia, multiple federal partners, industry participants and other stakeholders cooperating to broaden and deepen technical knowledge and steam line the regulation of new environmental technologies.

"Sheri's and Brad's technical expertise and practical experience have been invaluable to the high level of quality in the products that the team has been able to provide," said team leader Stuart J. Nagourney, New Jersey representative.

The team was formed in 2002 to address the opportunities presented by a number of innovations and changes in the sampling and monitoring field related to real-time information, continuous monitoring and long-term monitoring for site closure and stewardship.

"Sherri and Brad have been integral parts of the team's efforts to develop technology and guidance documents on a variety of subjects," Nagourney said.

2007 People's Choice Award Winners

Colonel Dorothy F. Klasse "Be One Team" Award

Pine Flat Team

At Pine Flat, the team realizes that production alone does not create a top notch team; it takes respect, common goals and "bottom-up" leadership. Last year, the team successfully completed several projects, including a remodel and modernization of the Pine Flat Project Office, refurbishment and redesign of the Island Park Campground. The team prides itself on their ability to analyze the needs of the visiting public. The public consistently has provided positive remarks on both park facilities and members of the Pine Flat Staff. In 2006 Pine Flat Lake was named one of "America's Top Fishing Spots" by Reserve America. The enjoyable and harmonious nature of the team can best be seen through their special team building efforts at the lake, including cleanup events and team barbeques. In all, the Pine Flat Team is an exemplary team, demonstrating loyalty to mission, respect for others, selfless service in their ability cooperate and effectively achieve goals, and honor and integrity by taking pride in their work.



George Weddell Award for Professional Excellence

Michael Ramsbotham



Michael Ramsbotham has been recognized in his field since the late 1990's, serving as a Regional Technical Expert for Geotechnical Design and Levee and Dam Construction. His expertise and technical support is sought, not only by his peers in the District and the Corps, but also by external agencies and organizations. He has provided support to other Districts across the nation, including the design and reconstruction of the Herbert Hoover Dike in Jacksonville District.

Michael was the primary author of the original SOP for Geotechnical Levee practice, which is used not only by the Corps, but also by the state of California and private consulting firms. He is currently updating the filter design appendix to the Engineering Manual for Dam seepage analysis and control, a document that's used across the globe.

Hattie Peterson Inspiration Award

Karl Mai



Karl Mai is a senior materials engineer/architectural engineer in the Construction Quality Assurance Section. As a 17-year-old in the late 1970s, Karl escaped Viet Nam in a bamboo fishing boat without his family, without any money, and without any knowledge of English. He came to the United States and began working as a dishwasher while learning English at night. He was named "Student of the Year" in high school which earned him a scholarship to the University of Colorado. By the time he graduated, he was running a landscape business, and has had several successful businesses since then.

Karl consistently goes the extra mile to ensure that our customers are provided with first-rate facilities.

Karl continues to help others in the Vietnamese Community adjust to life in America. He is presently sponsoring a nephew from Viet Nam who is starting college locally in Sacramento.

Whether it is working long hours, explaining the latest engineering concepts or simply helping someone move tables, Karl is always there to lend a helping hand.

Lt. Gen. Arthur E. Williams Outstanding Service Award

Stephen D. Slinkard

Steve Slinkard epitomizes service to the public through his involvement in virtually every district service activity, extracurricular service, and professionalism.

Some of the many groups he participates in and often leads include Employee Council, the Corps-a-liers and the CFC. Steve works hard to promote a team spirit within the District and with other agencies. He is the "go to" guy for any mechanical issues relating to civil works projects. He is a Registered Professional Engineer in the State of California and has been a member of various professional societies such as ASME and ASEE.

Steve has been a member of the disaster response Structural Assessment Team; a member of the Emergency Evacuation Team; a participant in the Adopt a School program to encourage high schools students to study math and science and has worked similarly with Sacramento State students. He also was a member of the Division's Risk Assessment and Management of Dams team in the aftermath of 9/11, and a FEMA damage assessor after the Northridge earthquake.

He has served in a variety of public service roles as a leader in the Davis Community Church including providing food and shelter for the homeless. He has also participated in the Habitat for Humanity and Christmas in April organizations, and is currently a Track Ambassador at Infineon Raceway.



Lewis A. Whitney Leadership Award

James Sandner



Jim's leadership abilities extend far beyond his job as Chief of the Operations and Readiness Branch. Jim always provides positive feedback, and has the ability give negative feedback in a positive manner. If one of his team members has serious personal issues, he will take his own personal time to offer counsel and if needed consolation. Jim is very active with mentoring individuals for professional development both formally and informally. He is an avid supporter of the LDP program, and he actively mentors the field rangers, often visiting them at their duty stations. He supports all District committees and programs, including employee Council SDRAC, Metrics, the CFC, and LDP, and actively encourages his employees to participate in these activities. Jim's performance always exceeds expectations. Most evenings he is still in the office long after everyone else has gone home. He frequently comes in on his days off to ensure that important projects have been satisfactorily completed. All in all Jim is a motivator of others. Many employees look up to Jim, are encouraged and challenged by him, and want to improve in order to meet his expectations. Jim leads by example, and is always encouraging his team to meet their greatest potential.

Laura Asay Exceptional Support Award

DeWayne Jacobsen



DeWayne Jacobsen serves as the Electrical Technician for the Utah Resident Office, which annually performs \$50 million of military construction of often complex and one-of-a-kind buildings. DeWayne's broad technical expertise in Base power distribution, interior and exterior electrical, lightning protection, security, communication and fire protection systems, and systems control wiring, provides unmatched support to the District's mission needs. DeWayne exceeds expectations by selflessly performing critical duties outside normal business hours under demanding conditions that require 100% reliability to insure minimal interruption of electrical power to customers.

New location, activities highlight Holiday Party

By Tyler Stalker

Rick Meagher’s “NSPS Blues” were about the only blues being sung at this year’s Sacramento District Holiday Party as the event had a fresh venue, menu and activities to draw in the crowd on December 14.

The Sacramento District Recreation Association Committee, which organized and executed many of the aspects of the party tried to give the Sacramento District a new experience. With that in mind, silent auctions were added to help fundraise for future District events and provide guests with prepackaged gifts for the holidays. The Corporate Board performed as the “Corporate Elvii,” with Col. Thomas Chapman, Lt. Col. Jim Porter, Chief of Engineering Kevin Knuuti, Chief of Planning Frank Piccola and Chief of Construction Mike Mahoney all dressed up as a different Elvis Presley.

Not to be outdone, the Operational Management Board took the crowd back to the fabulous fifties with poodle skirts and ‘T-Bird’-esque leather jackets for a little song and dance.

The OMB ended up winning with audience’s applause and the friendly competition between the two groups.

This year’s event also saw a new menu brought to the Holiday Party. Typically, the party has featured a buffet-style meal that required everybody to get up and move around to get food. This year, the

committee decided they wanted people to just sit back, relax and enjoy the party, so the menu was changed to a sit-down meal that gave party-goers the choice of a chicken, beef or vegetarian selection along with dessert.

While many aspects of the party changed this year, some remained the same.

The party kicked off with some music and a slide show of District team members from throughout the year, the Corps-a-liers sang a few carols and the usual collection of length-of-service Leadership Development Program and People’s

Choice awards were announced and distributed.

This year’s event was held at the Holiday Inn on the corner of 3rd and J streets after being held at The Grand ballroom for many years.



Photo by Michael Nevins
Rick Meagher performs the NSPS Blues, a parody on the recently instituted pay system at Sacramento. The song was written by Meagher and Miki Fujitsubo.



Photos by Michael Nevins
Above: Frank Piccola, Kevin Knuuti, Michael Mahoney, Col. Thomas Chapman and Lt. Col. James Porter perform as the Corporate Elvii during the Holiday Party.

Right: Harvey Jones, Linda Finley and the rest of the Operations Management Board took the crowd back to the fifties with their song and dance.



| March 2008 | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|-----------|---|--------|--|
| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Sat/Sun |
| March is Women's History Month | | | | | 1/2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8/9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 SDRAC Breakfast Fundraiser Served by the OMB | 14 | 15/16 |
| 17 St. Patrick's Day | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22/23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29/30 Civil War re-enactment at Knights Ferry |

| April 2008 | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|---|--------|---------|
| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Sat/Sun |
| 31 Caesar Chavez Day | 1 April Fool's Day | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5/6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 SDRAC Breakfast Fundraiser Served by the Corp. Bd. | 11 | 12/13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19/20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26/27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | | | |

National Security Personnel System hits Sacramento

It's finally official.

The Sacramento District has converted over from the old General Schedule pay system to the new National Security Personnel System as of the pay period beginning February 17, joining the supervisors who were converted last year.

NSPS will require employees and supervisors to develop new objectives, which will be scored in panels and ultimately compared to others in your career field to decide your salary for the upcoming year.

Many things will not change with the arrival of NSPS. Merit system principles, benefits, training, leave and work schedules and the Fair Labor Standards Act are just a few of the many items that will not be affected in any way by the conversion. However, one major change that may cause people to make a double-take at

their rating at year-end is the scoring. The system is now the exact opposite of the old GS-system when reviews come up at year-end. In the NSPS ratings, a 4- or 5-rating is a top performer and a 3-rating is an above-average rating rather than just an average performer. A rating of "1" is no longer desirable in the eyes of NSPS.

The NSPS system is designed to attract and retain top talent; promote high performance; improve accountability for employees, supervisors and leaders; and to provide the organization

with the flexibility to respond to mission changes.



For more information on NSPS, you can visit:
www.cpol.army.mil/library/general/nsps

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